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PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of

Tsugio OKAMOTO

Group Art Unit: 3653

Application No.: 10/810,670

Examiner: K. BOWER

Filed: March 29, 2004

Docket No.: 119259

For: PAPER FEED DEVICE AND IMAGE FORMING APPARATUS

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In reply to the June 21, 2005, Office Action and the July 7, 2005, Supplemental Office Action Summary, reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-16 are pending.

I. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112, First Paragraph

The Office Action rejects claims 1-16 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement because the claims contain subject matter that was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. Specifically, the Office Action asserts that the claimed terms "link element" and "operation lever" do not appear in the text of the specification. Further, the Office Action asserts that it is unclear that a "link element" and an "operation lever" appear in the figures.

Although the Office Action indicates the claims recite a "link element," Applicant believes that the Office Action is referring a "link mechanism" as properly recited in the

claims. Thus, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection with respect to the features of a "link mechanism" and an "operation lever."

Independent claims 1, 8 and 9 recite a paper feed device, including an "operation lever," is switched between a first state and a second state. When the operation lever is in the first state, a power transmission mechanism transmits a driving force to a support unit. When the operation lever is in the second state, a "link mechanism" cuts off the transmission of the driving force to the support unit, and the support unit is disengaged from the driving unit by an operation of the link mechanism. Therefore, the link mechanism may cut off the transmission of the driving force to the support unit.

The specification discloses a paper stopper 28 that is changed to switch power transmission (page 22, lines 2-4). However, power transmission may also be switched through an operation of changing a direction of another component or by an exclusive lever (page 2, lines 4-8). Therefore, the paper stopper 28 is only one type of the claimed "operation lever" that may be operated to switch power transmission. Additionally, a knob 29 may be provided at a center of a plate surface of the paper stopper 28 (page 12, lines 11-14). A shape of the knob may allow a user to grip the knob so that the paper stopper may be changed to switch power transmission. Therefore, the combination of the paper stopper and the knob may constitute another type of the claimed "operation lever" that may be operated to switch power transmission.

For example, the paper stopper 28 may also be positioned in an erected state, e.g., a first state, and an open state, e.g., a second state (Figs. 2 and 4, and page 12, lines 22-25). When the paper stopper 28 is operated to enter the erected state, a downwardly extending protrusion 32b of a gear releasing plate 32 does not abut against a protrusion 55a of a fixing gear plate 55 (Fig. 2, page 16, line 4-15). As a result, power transmission belts 57 transmit a

driving force moving support bodies 58 upward to lift a rotating shaft 66 and a setting plate 23 (page 16, lines 15-25).

When the paper stopper 28 is operated to enter the open state, the protrusion 32b and the protrusion 55a abut against each other to cut off the transmission of a retaining force from a stepping motor 51 to support the setting plate 23, and the gear 56 of the support is disengaged from the planet gear 54 of the stepping motor 51 (page 17, lines 1-13). Because the abutment of the protrusion 32b and the protrusion 55a cut off the transmission of a driving force to support the setting plate 23, the protrusion 32b and the protrusion 55a form the claimed "link mechanism."

For at least the reasons set forth above, the specification and the figures provide ample support for the terms "operation lever" and "linking mechanism" in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

II. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-16 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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